INFORMATION

For the Miniſters in the Dioceſs of Aberdene *Cited before the Parliament.*

IT is not unknown to moſt of the Kingdom, that the Miniſters of the Dioceſs of *Aberdene*, gave full and ſufficient Evidence of their firm Adherence to the Proteſtant Religion, and that in the moſt dangerous times. After it pleaſed God to bring about this Revolution, and to Eſtabliſh His Majeſty upon the Throne, they did ſubmit unto, and own His Majeſties Government, and ſent ſeveral Addreſſes humbly ſupplicating for Protection, and had repeated Aſſurances thereof given them under His Majeſties Hand, thorow the benigne Influences whereof, they lived in their Charges peaceably and Chriſtianly ſetting about the Office of their Miniſtry.

It having pleaſed the Honourable Members of this current Parliament, to aboliſh Epiſcopacy, thereafter to Eſtabliſh Presbeterian Government, and having lodged the power in the perſons of the then ſurviving Presbeterian Miniſters, and ſuch as they had admitted, or ſhould admit; there was a Meeting of a General Aſſembly indicted, which accordingly met, but there being none admitted, or preſent to repreſent the *Nothern Dioceſes*, the ſaid Miniſters did humbly Addreſs themſelves to His Majeſtie, who thereupon at the next General Aſſembly recomended to the Members thereof, to admit of their Brethren who conformed to Epiſcopacy, in the Terms of a *formula*, which His Majeſtie was graciouſly pleaſed to concert for them.

Conform, and in Obedience to His Majeſties Letter, the Miniſters foreſaid ſent their Commiſſioners to the General Aſſembly, who in the terms of the ſaid *Formula*, offered to unite with their Presbeterian Brethren, that ſo any further Diviſions in this Church might be prevented, and the Whole Miniſtry of the Nation might be duely repreſented in a General Aſſembly, but this their Addreſs being rejected, they returned *re infecta*.

Thereafter the General Aſſembly having appointed Committees, to go thorow the *North*, for Planting Vacancies, and doing ſome other things for which they had given them particular Inſtructions, and accordingly theſe Committees having cited ſome of the Epiſcopal Miniſters before them, they with ſome others of their Brethren did meet, and having drawn up ſome four or five Queries, relating to their Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction, to be preſented unto the ſaid Committee, where to they deſired Reſolution 'er they could be clear to ſubmit themſelves unto them; to which when they got no Satisfactorie Anſwer, the Miniſters foreſaid did with all Submiſſion to the Civil Government, enter their Proteſtation and appealed to His Majeſtie for Protection.

The Committee judging that thereby their power is incroached upon, did Addreſs His Majeſties high Commiſſioner and Eſtates of Parliament, for redreſſing Grievances: and thoſe that more immediatly concern theſe Proteſters are.

Primo, That they meet in their pretended Presbyteries and Synods, and Act as if they were Legal Judicatories. 2. That diverſe of them have intruded into vacant Churches, without any legal Call, Allowance of, or Application to any Church Judicatory for that Effect. 3 That the Committee when in the North, met with ſeveral Proteſtations from the Epiſcopal Miniſters, which were Declinatures of the Authority of the Church Judicatures, tending to perpetuat Schiſm, and a manifeſt contempt of the Law.

This Addreſs being read in Parliament, it was recommended to the Honourable Committee appointed for Security of the Nation, to conſider it, and to call before them the Miniſters concerned in theſe Proteſtations: and accordingly they being Cited and Compearing, it pleaſed the *Præſes* and other Members of that Honourable Meeting, to Ordain them to give in Anſwers to thir ſeveral Points underwritten, *viz. Primo*, By what Authority they kept Meetings. 2. How they came to preſent the Queries to the late Committee of the General Aſſembly. And 3. How they vindicat their Proteſtation from claſhing with the Civil Power. In the Terms of which Ordinance, they having the next day Compeared, gave in their following Anſwers, *viz.*

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As to the firſt, *viz.* By what Authority they keep Meetings, *&c.* They declared, they did not keep any authoritative Meetings, as Church Judicatories, but only for Conſultation and Deliberation, how to demain themſelves in their ſeveral Charges, for ſuppreſſing Sin and Vice, and advancing the Intereſts of the Goſpel: And they being under no Cenſure from any Judicatorie, whether Civil or Eccleſiaſtick, they thought they might continue in ſuch Meetings from time to time, being all along under His Majeſties Protection. As to the Second, *viz.* How they came to preſent the Queries to the Committee of the late *General Aſſembly?* Its anſwered, that they were encouraged thereunto by the eight Article of Inſtructions, given by the *Aſſembly*, to the Committee foreſaid, wherein its ſeriouſly recommended to them, and they peremptorly required to take all pains to Inform, Convince and Satisfie all ſuch perſons of their Miſtakes, who think that they had receeded from their known Principles, and having had no previous Opportunity of Conference, for removing their Scrouples, they humbly conceived that they were obliged to lay hold upon that Occaſion. And had there been any Chriſtian and Miniſterial Conference afterward allowed them, it is like, before this time their Debaits and Doubts might have been buried, and theſe things removed out of the way, which are the Occaſion of their ſad and woful Diviſions.

As to the Third, that their Proteſtation doth claſh with the Civil Power, It was Anſwered, That as hitherto they have owned his Majeſties Authority, by praying for his Majeſty, keeping the Faſts and Thankſgivings appointed by the Government, and are reſolved to continue in ſo doing. So it was never their Deſign or Intention to do any thing which might ſeem to contradict their conſtant Profeſſion and Practice, neither will they own or adhere to any thing which may appear to be inconſiſtent therewith: And finally, had they ever thought that this their Appeal and Proteſtation, would have given any offence to the Civil Power, they would never have entered or preſented the ſame.

By all which it may appear, that as hitherto they have indeavoured to live unblemable in their Lives and Doctrine, ſo they have been ſo far from deſigning to do any thing that might be offenſive to the Civil Government, that they have hitherto intirely depended upon his Majeſties gracious Favour and Protection; and therefore they in all humility expect, that his Majeſties high Commiſſioner, and honourable Eſtates of Parliament will be convinced of this their ſincere Vindication, and allow them the ſame Protection they have had from His Majeſty, they behaving themſelves as good Chriſtians and Loyal Subjects in their ſeveral Stations.

That his Grace His Majeſties High Commiſſioner, and Honourable Eſtates of Parliament may be the more convinced, that the preſenting of theſe Querries was out of no Deſigned Contempt, but that theſe Miniſters were Incouraged ſo to do by the Inſtructions from the Aſſembley to their Committee, there is here ſubjoyned the Eight Paragraph thereof, as it is contained in the 11 *Act* of their Aſſembly, Intituled *Act* approving Overturs anent a Commiſſion of the General Aſſembly, and Inſtructions thereto, the words wherof are. *And it being Informed, that ſeveral aſperſions are laid on the Miniſters and Judicators of the Church, by ſome Perſons, as if the ſaids Miniſters and Judicators, had receded from the known Principals thereof, in Relation to the Conſtitution and Government of the Church, contained in the* Confeſſion of Faith, *though the contrair thereof be Evident, not only by the Miniſters, their owning of, and Adhering to the ſaid* Confeſſion, *wherein theſe Principals are contained, but alſo by the whole Courſe of their Miniſtrie: That therefore, the General Aſſembly require the ſaid Commiſſion, to take all due Pains, to Inform, Convince, and Satisfie any ſuch Perſons of their Miſtaks, that they may be Reclaimed*